



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Cllr Emily Smith
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Kemi Badenoch MP

*Minister of State for Equalities and Levelling Up
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Dear Cllr Smith,

Thank you very much for your letter dated 5 November, on behalf of the Vale of White Horse District Council, regarding the council tax referendum principles.

The Government recognises that local authorities have worked hard to deliver vital services, often through periods of financial pressure and continued efficiency savings.

I note your view that the Vale of White Horse District Council should be given flexibility to take account of its historically low council tax levels. As you recognise, for the purposes of the Spending Review, the Government assumed that lower tier councils would have the flexibility to increase council tax, without a referendum, by the greater of up to 2%/£5 each year. The Secretary of State sets referendum principles annually as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, following a period of consultation.

We will consult on proposed referendum principles as part of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement later this year. That will provide the opportunity for the Vale of White Horse District Council to make formal representations in support of their case. Final referendum principles for 2022/23 will be confirmed early next year following a vote in the House of Commons.

Yours sincerely,

KEMI BADENOCH MP